



A Publication  
of the

# TENNESSEE ECONOMIC COUNCIL ON WOMEN



March 2013

## Violence Among Young Adults Reinforces Need for Better Programs and Funding

*Outreach at Early Ages Can Prevent Violent and Costly Behavior, Say Experts*



Left to Right: Dir. Phyllis Qualls-Brooks, Council Members: Kathleen Walker, Janet Smith (hearing chair), Yvonne Wood (chair), Comm. Susan Whitaker, Veronica Marable Johnson

One in three American women will experience domestic or sexual violence in their lifetime, estimates the CDC, and one in four men will exhibit abusive behavior according to testimony during the TECW's Violence Against Women hearing this week. Perhaps more chilling, still, was testimony from

Lawrence County Juvenile Court Magistrate Ashley Dunkin, stating that an increasing number of domestic violence cases are being reported in which children and young adults are the offenders, and statistics from Wayne County Chief Deputy Gerald Baer, who shared that roughly 80 percent of all calls received by the Sheriff's department and six of seven murder cases in the last three years were domestic violence-related.

Adding further cause for concern; nearly every presenter at the Columbia hearing—and the Chattanooga event before it—expressed confidence that the reported, detectable statistics for crimes like domestic violence, human sex trafficking and

...Continued on Page 4

## Message from Executive Director Phyllis Qualls-Brooks

Dear Colleagues,



Spring has sprung and we are continuing with various projects at the Economic Council. The Council stands tall at 15. As part of the recognition of the Tennessee Economic Council's milestone year, the organization was honored at the Tennessee Political Caucus at its annual Yellow Rose Luncheon for its 15th year anniversary. Many former Council & Foundation members were in attendance.

Additionally, we just completed our second hearing on the Economic Impact of Violence Against Women in Columbia, TN, at Columbia State Community College, covering the South Central District. Dr. Janet Smith, president of CSCS and her team, led by Nancy Ramsey, did an outstanding job of coordinating the hearing and providing experts, practitioners and survivors to testify about this issue from an economic perspective.

On the legislative front, the measure to continue the Economic Council is moving forward. The bill has passed in the House and in the Senate. Once full legislative passage has occurred and the Governor signs it, the Council will be approved for continual operations through 2015, before it goes before another Sunset process.

I am delighted to congratulate many of the Council & Foundation members Carol Berz and Pat Pierce for their special recognitions during March. See more in this newsletter.

I am continually proud to lead an organization that has such an outstanding Council, made up of individuals who strive for the betterment of women, their communities and this state on a continuous basis. My thanks to one and all.

Warmest regards,

Phyllis Qualls-Brooks, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

### In This Issue...

Columbia Hearing Reveals Need to Reach Youth	1
Message From The Director	1
Reflecting on Equal Pay Day	2
TECW Members Honored	2
TECW 2013 Calendar	3
Violence Against Women Dates and Locations	5



## Reflecting on Equal Pay Day

Equal Pay Day, on April 9th, has been declared by President Barack Obama and the National Committee on Pay Equity to signify the existence of wage discrimination and the ongoing efforts to bridge this pay gap. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the gap between male and female median wages increased in America in 2012, with women earning just 80.9 percent of male weekly earnings at the median. In 2011, the ratio was 82.2 percent, and when measured annually, the Census Bureau puts the rate at just 77 percent in Tennessee and nationally. Several studies, including the Economic Council's own Wage Gap report, have shown that this gap begins as soon as women graduate and persists in

nearly every sector. What's more, the gap is shown to increase as men and women grow older, resulting in a life-

time disparity that totals in the hundreds of thousands. The pay gap study from the Center for American Progress shows that 63.9 percent of women are either primary breadwinners or co-breadwinners. Women are also more likely than men to spend their wages on household purchases, childcare, and other various needs for everyday life—losing almost half a million dollars over the course of one's career makes it difficult for a woman to afford health insurance, transportation and education. "This wage gap does more than stifle a woman's ability to meet the needs of herself and those in her household," says TECW Director Phyllis Qualls-Brooks, "it reflects a diminished role in the workplace, where emerging research proves women are improving stock values and decision-making."

The 2013 Presidential Proclamation, states: "Working women are at the heart of an America built to last. Equal pay will strengthen our families, grow our economy, and enable the best ideas and boldest innovations to flourish – regardless of the innovator's gender."

...Continued on Page 3




Members of the Tennessee Women's Political Caucus recognize past and present members of the TECW and don hats in salute of the day's honoree, fm. Sen. Beverly Morrero.

## Council's Carol Berz and Foundation's Pat Pierce Lauded in March

### Berz Honored by Tennessee Human Rights Commission

Dr. Carol Berz was honored as one of Chattanooga's outstanding human rights advocates by the Tennessee Human Rights Commission's during its 50th Anniversary reception this month. Dr. Berz spent eleven years as a commissioner with the Chattanooga Human Rights/Human Relations Commission, dealing with employment and civil rights matters and was the first female Chairperson of that body. Dr. Berz owns Private Dispute Resolution Services, LLC, a mediation services and conflict management system design organization and is both a mediator and national trainer in general civil and family mediation. As the Council's Southeast Development District representative, Dr. Berz organized the Council's statewide forums on the Economic Impact of Domestic Violence and co-authored subsequent Council publications on that topic. She chairs the Council's Economic Impact Committee and serves on the Chattanooga City Council, where she is chair of the Budget & Finance Committee.

### Pierce Recognized by Int'l Women's Day Conference

The TECW celebrates the recognition of Pat Pierce at the 2013 International Women's Day Conference for her work as a strong advocate for equality in Tennessee and nationally. A retired administrator from Vanderbilt University, she is the immediate past chair of the Board of Commissioners of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission. She was also a delegate to the Vision 2020 Congress that developed a national initiative to achieve pay equity, increase the number of women in senior leadership positions in American life and other goals by 2020, the centennial of the 19th Amendment. She serves as scholarship chair of the Tennessee Economic Council Foundation Board and is a member of the Nashville Sports Council Board of Directors. 



Left to Right: Beverly Watts, Executive Director, The Human Rights Commission, Pat Pierce and Carol Berz.




## Reflecting on Equal Pay Day ...continued

...Continued from Page 2 The TECW's recent study of the Status of Women in Tennessee Counties reported that nearly 70 percent of working-age women in the state are now participating in the workforce, up from 42 percent in 2000, and women now hold more than 36 percent of managerial positions, up from 27.5 percent. Connected Tennessee's published report, *Broadband: Empowering Women-Owned Businesses* shows that Tennessee's women-owned businesses bring nearly \$3 billion in revenues to Tennessee, with \$967 million coming from online sales and services.

"We have had some successes, but we have a great deal more work to do. Equal pay is not yet a reality for women and it is a fact that when women achieve equity, it improves the economy overall," said TECW Chair Yvonne

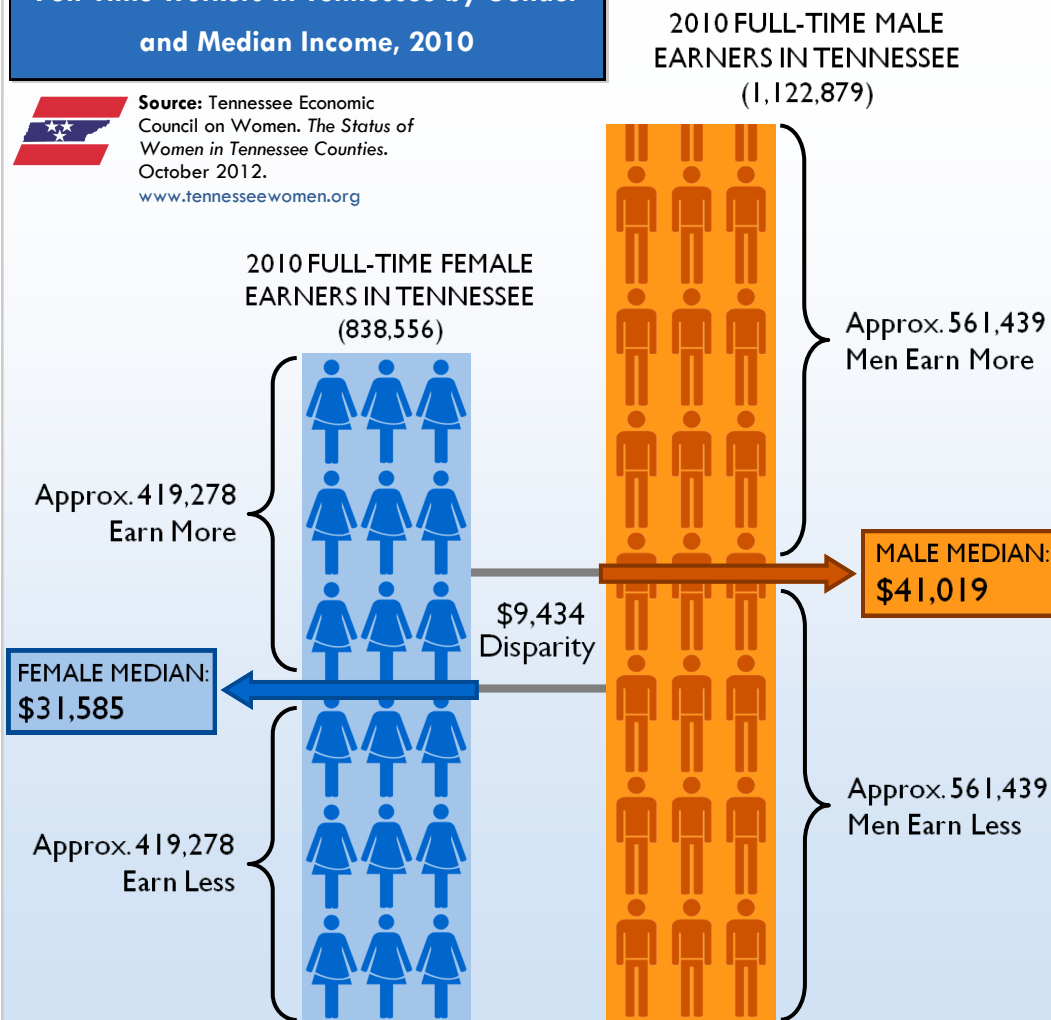
Wood at March's Yellow Rose Luncheon. "Wearing red on Equal Pay Day, learning more about the wage gap, or attending a local rally are ways to help close this gap." Individuals can also contact members of Congress to raise awareness, and should encourage other women and men to get involved and help America put an end to wage inequality.

This economic issue affects not only women, but also children, men that are married to working women, and the economy itself. Women are pillars in their households, providing for their families and often for relatives. Though related legislation like the federal Pay-check Fairness Act is still gathering support in Congress, women are taking action and making progress in Tennessee and across the nation. 

### Full-Time Workers In Tennessee by Gender and Median Income, 2010



Source: Tennessee Economic Council on Women. *The Status of Women in Tennessee Counties*. October 2012.  
[www.tennesseeewomen.org](http://www.tennesseeewomen.org)



## Upcoming 2013 Events

### May

May 3, 2013

**Violence Against Women  
Hearing - Crossville City Hall**

May 10, 2013

**Violence Against Women  
Hearing - Memphis, TN**

Revised: May 16, 2013

**VAW Hearing - Belmont University  
Nashville**

May 17, 2013

**Spring Quarterly Meeting  
Nashville**

May 22, 2013

**VAW Hearing - Knoxville, UT Extension  
Eastern Reg. Office, 1801 Downtown West Blvd.**

### June

June 14, 2013

**East Tennessee Women's Leadership  
Conference, Knoxville**

June 20, 2013

**Violence Against Women  
Hearing - Trenton, TN**

### July

July 15, 2013

**Violence Against Women  
Hearing - Jackson, TN**

### August

August 16, 2013

**TECW Annual Retreat - Columbia  
State Community College**

August 17, 2013

**Summer Quarterly Meeting**

### October

October 27-28, 2013

**10<sup>th</sup> Annual Economic Summit for  
Women-Nashville**

October 29, 2013

**Fall Quarterly Meeting**

## Columbia VAW Hearing ...continued

...Continued from Page 1 sexual assault fall far short of the real numbers. In much the same way, speakers agreed that funding and program efficacy fall far short of where they need to be to properly respond to, and ultimately prevent, such crimes.

## Perception

Speaking specifically about human sex trafficking, which is estimated to affect more than 1,000 new women and girls in Tennessee each year, Dr. Cecilia Mo, an Assistant Professor at Vanderbilt University, discussed the way in which our society treats these actions as crimes, but overlooks their impact as a violation of basic human rights. This perspective, says Mo, tends to create policies that punish offenders but overlook victims. To illustrate this point, Mo cited statistics from a Polaris Project study, which reveals that there are between 13,000 and 17,500 new human trafficking victims in the United States, annually, but there are only 1,644 shelter beds available to help protect and treat victims.

## High Costs

An enduring theme at the hearing, which heard testimony from public officials, business owners, service providers and law enforcement, was that existing programs that react to domestic and sexual crimes against women must be improved, and that they do very little to prevent behaviors that burden victims, employers and the general public with immense costs. For example, an ongoing training program to help Tennessee's 20,000 first responders to properly identify and react to human-trafficking cases was estimated at the hearing to cost the state approximately \$700,000 dollars. Similarly, Lt. Robin Howell of the Columbia Police Department testified that a single operation related to sex trafficking on the website Backpage.com cost the department more than

\$6,000, including 260 personnel hours.

Angela Slack, Executive Director of the Hope House, a Columbia shelter aiding victims of domestic and sexual abuse, testified that her shelter is working with a budget of \$437,000 this year, which is derived primarily from donations, and offers programs that cost anywhere from \$117 to \$12,935 per person to operate. Similar to many providers across the state, the Hope House is providing more services to more victims each year, but is struggling to do so with a budget that is stretched thin from decreases in recent years.

"We heard loud and clear in the South Central Development District what we've been hearing throughout the state: we have very little in place to prevent domestic and sexual abuse from happening, and we are paying the price for that shortsightedness through law-enforcement, court and incarceration costs, and through the stop-gap treatment of victims. We also know that businesses are not attracted to a community that is plagued by crimes like domestic violence," said Dr. Janet Smith, chair of the hearing and President of Columbia State. "Moving forward, we need to address this comprehensive threat by recognizing that we can stop a lot of this behavior before it starts and keep it from passing down through generations, if we teach the right lessons to our children."

## Prevention

Local advocates pushed for programs that reach out to children at the elementary school level, and focus not only on identifying red flags and bad behaviors, but teaching youth about supportive, healthy relationships, and

reaching out to boys at an early age to establish proper behavior and accountability. "Our current system relies on deterrence and programs like anger management to resolve patterns of crime and abuse after they start, and we are failing to break the cycle," says Slack. "Domestic violence isn't about anger, it's about learned patterns of power and control; and human traf-

ficking is a business in which proprietors' profits vastly outweigh potential costs once they begin to treat human beings as a commodity. We need to make it as clear to young boys and girls that hitting a woman or taking advantage of someone for sex are moral, social and economic crimes that should never be tolerated."

Tennessee has recently taken several important steps to curb violence against women, such as increasing sentencing requirements for human trafficking offenders, decriminalizing prostitution for minors—all of whom are considered to have been coerced into the act—and implementing a strategy to enhance the state's response to human trafficking and its victims, but testimony suggests that our understanding of these crimes is still growing, and that Tennessee is still playing a desperate game of catch-up.



Hope House's Angela Slack



**For hearing information contact us:**

**(615) 253-4266**

[www.tennesseewomen.org](http://www.tennesseewomen.org)

[www.facebook.com/TNECW](https://www.facebook.com/TNECW)

[info.ECW@tn.gov](mailto:info.ECW@tn.gov)

# 2013 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN HEARINGS



TENNESSEE ECONOMIC  
COUNCIL ON WOMEN



The Tennessee Economic Council on Women will convene nine public hearings in 2013 to explore *the economic impact of violence against women in Tennessee*. From law enforcement and court costs to healthcare, social services and business concerns, violence perpetrated against women is costing Tennesseans millions, and the Council's efforts will better define that expense for use by leaders, policymakers, and advocates statewide.

## ATTEND A HEARING NEAR YOU!

**May 3rd - Crossville, TN**

**Crossville City Hall**

Crossville, Tennessee: Jane Powers & Carmen Wyatt, Co-Chairs

**May 10th - Memphis, TN**

Location TBA: Deborah Clubb & Kristi Stanley, Co-Chairs

**May 16th - Nashville, TN**

**Belmont University**

Nashville, Tennessee: Yvonne Wood & Mimi Barnard, Co-Chairs;  
Committee: Veronica Marable Johnson, Sen. Mae Beavers, Susan Huggins,  
Janice Sontany, Susan Whitaker

**May 22nd - Knoxville, TN**

**UT Extension, Eastern Reg. Office**

**1801 Downtown West Blvd**

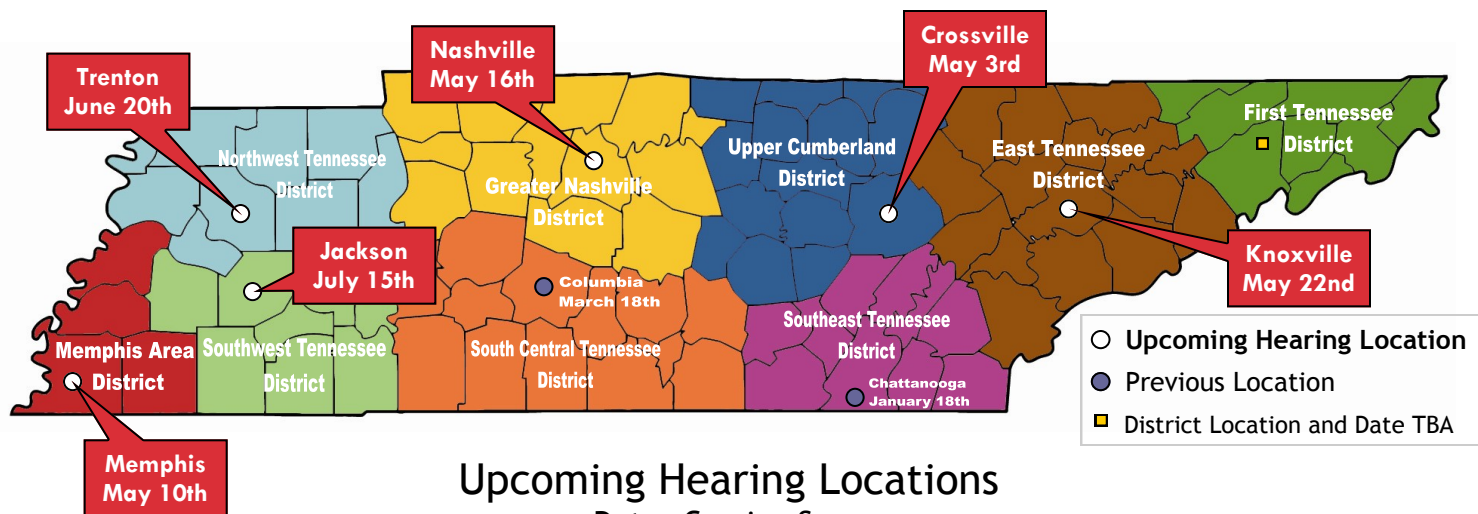
Knoxville, Tennessee: Dena Wise, Chair; Ruby Miller, Pat Pierce &  
Wendy Pitts Reeves, Co-Chairs

**June 20th - Trenton, TN**

Location TBA: Carol Danehower & Shawn Francisco, Co-Chairs

**July 15th - Jackson, TN**

Location TBA: Kathleen Armour Walker, Chair



## Upcoming Hearing Locations

- Dates Coming Soon -

**First Tennessee Development District**  
Elliott Moore, Chair

TECW hearings are open to the public. If you would like to attend or participate in future hearings, please contact the Tennessee Economic Council on Women at 615-253-4266 or [info.ecw@tn.gov](mailto:info.ecw@tn.gov). Information current as of February 25, 2013.



A Study by the Tennessee Economic Council on Women  
Snodgrass Tower | 312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243 | (615) 253-4266  
[www.tennesseewomen.org](http://www.tennesseewomen.org)